

see that the combinations in our midst are brought to the bar of justice and that they pay the penalty. Then, we are told by hon. gentlemen opposite that unrestricted reciprocity will cure these evils. Why, combinations on the other side are one hundred fold more numerous than they are in this country. I have a list of them here, and I will read to the House some of the articles which are subject to combinations in the United States:

"The Standard Oil Trust and American Cotton Oil Trust have sown their seed in a fertile soil, and the rank growth is to-day polluting the air and stifling the existence of healthy life and progress. It is currently reported and believed that "trust" monopolies have drawn within their grasp not only kerosene oil and cotton seed oil, but sugar, oatmeal, starch, white cornmeal, straw paper, pearled barley, coal, straw-board, castor-oil, linseed-oil, lard, school slate, oil cloth, salt, cattle, gas, street railways, whiskey, rubber, steel, steel rails, steel and iron beams, nails, wrought-iron pipes, iron nuts, stoves, lead copper, envelopes, paper bags, paving pitch, cordage, coke, reaping and binding and mowing machines, threshing machines, ploughs, glass and water works, and the list is growing day by day. Millions of dollars in cash or property, are being drawn into the vortex."

And yet hon. members opposite think we must cure these evils by unrestricted reciprocity. What they say practically amounts to this: the jackals are abroad in this country, let us introduce a horde of American wolves to drive out the jackals. They say the hawks are carrying off the chickens and they would prevent that by permitting the American eagle and vulture to carry off our lambs. We find the system of the National Policy infested with parasites, and they cry out: "kill the National Policy." We say the good tree bears good fruit, but there are fungus growth and excrescences, and we will prune the good tree. They call on us, however, to cut it down, but I say that is unreasonable; we ought to preserve to the people the benefits of the National Policy which they have approved so often. Let us grapple with the evils which have grown up under it. On the other side of the line their Legislatures found they were paralysed by wealthy and powerful trusts. That is not the case with us. This Legislature will deal with these combines. We will yet see such a tumult about their heads as will very much surprise a great many people; and these combines will no longer exist after the Bill becomes law. I do not think I ought to take up the time of the House at greater length. There are some points that might be raised as to the position and grasping character of these trusts, but I do think this House will sympathise with those who have been arbitrarily excluded from the exercise of those privileges which they hereto enjoyed, as citizens of a free country, in purchasing their goods as they could do before these combines were formed. In the formation of these combines there has been unwarranted interference with freedom and civil rights. It is not to be borne that people should be compelled to pay so large an increase on the price of these articles and be subjected to insufferable exactions, as have been those who refused to enter the combines. Consider the case of the wholesale grocers, such as Mr. Joseph or Mr. Matthewson, of Montreal. It is well known that the sales of a wholesale grocer in sugar amounts to about \$300,000 a year, representing on an average about 15,000 barrels of sugar. These men, who have been excluded from the right of purchasing from refiners, have to pay 90 cents per barrel more for sugar than those in the trust, or \$12,000 out of their hard earnings, just because they could not reconcile their conscience to taking a solemn oath of secrecy and obedience to the dictates and rules of a trust; and because they refused to prostitute their consciences they were subjected to a taxation of \$12,000. These trusts have placed their hands on the sacred ark of freedom, and should be put under the ban of the law.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). The hon. member for Hamilton proposes that this Bill should be sent to the Committee on Banking and Commerce. I think, after the second reading that would be the proper thing to do with it, because, as it stands, it would be perfectly unworkable. I will call the

attention of the House to some of the provisions. The hon. gentleman proposes to punish as a special misdemeanor the granting to any person, who is a party to a combination, any facility which is not granted to other parties. A railway company may say: we will carry coal for so much if you will take a train load of it, but if you want simply a carload, we will not carry it for any such figure. And so, a combination made for putting up the price of an article might not be reached at all, nor would that made by a railway company for a rate be reached except under a special provision of this sort. So far as a combination of that is concerned, if it is to be effectively reached, it must be by some such principle as is recognised in the United States in the interstate commerce legislation. It shall also be a misdemeanor to unreasonably enhance the market price of an article or commodity which is an object of trade, but it would be utterly unreasonable to expect a judge to undertake to say what an unreasonable enhancing of the price would be. Would it be 5, 10 or 20 per cent.? That must be done by Parliament.

"For unduly restraining the traffic in any such article or commodity."

What is the undue restraint? Now, take an instance: The cotton manufacturers of Canada may have the capacity to manufacture 24,000,000 pounds per year. A surplus is created, and the only way to restore the relation between production and consumption is to stop manufacturing for a few months, and all parties agree to do that. They would come under the operation of this Act.

Mr. WALLACE. I have given notice of a motion to amend this by another Bill.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I have only the opportunity of considering the Bill which is before the House. The other is not before the House. I am pointing out the impracticable character of the measure before us. I have found that its provisions are largely unworkable. I think the object the hon. gentleman has undertaken to perform is, in many respects, a laudable object, but it could not be accomplished as his Bill now stands. I will not enter into discussion as to how far the Customs laws produce the state of things the hon. gentleman is trying to remedy, but I may point out that the hon. gentleman's Bill he asks us to read the second time will not accomplish its purposes. If the House reads the Bill the second time it will be necessary to send to the Committee where its provisions are being considered.

Mr. BROWN. Very large interests are at stake in the various sections of the trade and manufacture of Canada daily, and I desire very much to have the opportunity of being heard before the Committee to explain my views on the question. I move that the Bill be referred to the Committee on Banking and Commerce.

Mr. WALLACE. I must oppose this proposal, because I think it is simply an attempt to burke the Bill. That is the only object. There has been no matter brought up in this House that has received more thorough investigation from a Committee than this question of combinations. In the Committee last year 63 witnesses were examined and 26 meetings were held, and the other members of that Committee can tell the House that the subject was exhaustively considered. Of the 63 witnesses who were examined, 40 were members of combinations themselves, and they were here defending those combinations, and had the utmost opportunity of giving their views. I think they gave their opinions fully before a Committee of this House under oath, and it is not necessary now to refer this Bill to a Committee. I will, therefore, oppose the reference to a Committee, and, if necessary, I will ask the House to divide upon the proposition.